

# Emergency planning – District Councillors’ fact sheet

## Key Messages

- The County Council Emergency Planning & Business Continuity Service provide emergency planning and business continuity advice and guidance through a service level agreement, to the seven districts/borough councils in Lincolnshire ensuring local authorities meet statutory duties to prepare for emergencies.
- They will facilitate the production of, maintenance, test, exercise and review of emergency response plans and business continuity plans to an agreed timetable.
- They will facilitate workshops to ensure understanding of new or revised plans relevant to significant risks within the district/borough.
- They will provide training through exercises and seminars to all staff that have emergency planning roles and duties.
- They will ensure that 24 hour communication, support and assistance are available between the district and the emergency planning team.
- They will provide a liaison emergency planning officer who will be in the district for one day per week.
- They will co-ordinate the response and recovery to any major emergency within the county.
- They will undertake LRF partnership and a programme of work co-ordination on behalf of the district on a daily basis.
- They will provide support for any local response to emergencies that becomes prolonged. Additional support is also available through the joint service and mutual aid approach.

# Emergency planning – District Councillors’ fact sheet

- We are continually planning for all the top risks in Lincolnshire, and coastal flooding is a very high priority as tested in the award winning Exercise Watermark.
- We are required by legislation to assess risks, have emergency plans in place, and have people trained to deliver a range of services during emergencies.
- The council has a number of roles and responsibilities when responding to emergencies, from the welfare of victims, survivors and evacuee’s ... to the provision of emergency mortuary, and much more.
- We take the lead on co-ordinating the voluntary sector and for long-term community recovery following an emergency
- We need to test our preparedness and response to all the top risks in Lincolnshire. The excellent Exercise Georgiana tested our ability to deal with a major transport accident on the East Coast Mainline and we ensure that the local authorities have the opportunity to participate in the Lincolnshire Resilience Forum’s (LRF) annual preparedness exercise.
- The district/borough councils are key members of the LRF – a partnership held in high regard nationally.
- We have gained a national reputation for leading work on resilience partnerships, preparing for East Coast flooding and Events Safety.
- The County Council’s emergency planning team are based at the County Emergency Centre (CEC) Joint HQ, South Park, Lincoln.

## What is an emergency?

Emergencies happen somewhere in the country almost every minute of every day. The emergency services (police, fire, ambulance and other organisations) deal with them quickly and efficiently. These incidents can include traffic accidents, fires,

# Emergency planning – District Councillors’ fact sheet

medical emergencies and other serious incidents.



However, it is when a more disastrous event takes place that is beyond the capacity of the emergency services to deal with unaided that emergency plans are put into action. These plans are designed to support the emergency services in their difficult task, and it is our job to ensure these plans are in place and the council is ready to respond.

***Exercise Georgiana;** Fire & Rescue crews worked with Ambulance & Police colleagues, and community volunteers to free casualties during a major partnership exercise simulating a transport accident on the East Coast Mainline.*

Emergency planning focuses on serious risks that could result in an **‘emergency’**; defined by legislation as an ‘event or situation which threatens damage to human welfare or serious damage to the environment in Lincolnshire, or terrorism which threatens serious damage to the security of the United Kingdom’.

## What are the likely risks to Lincolnshire?

With partners in the county, we have published a *Community Risk Register* to look at the likelihood and impact of a range of hazards happening. The top ‘enduring’ risks for Lincolnshire include:

Pandemic flu, East Coast Flooding, Inland Flooding, Rapid Response Catchment, Severe Weather, Fuel Shortages, Loss of Critical Infrastructure, Animal Disease, Coastal Pollution, Malicious Acts, Industrial Accident and Transport Accidents.

# Emergency planning – District Councillors’ fact sheet



## The Community Risk Register

We are required to publish a community risk register (CRR). Our register has been held to represent national good practice and was recently recommended in a Wales Audit Office report.

For more information, visit [www.lincolnshireprepared.co.uk](http://www.lincolnshireprepared.co.uk) and download a full copy of the Community Risk Register.

We recommend members familiarise themselves with the risks most likely to occur in the communities they represent.

## Preparing to deal with emergencies in Lincolnshire

Each local authority (and each Fire & Rescue Service) is what is called a ‘category one responder’ (defined by the Civil Contingencies Act) and must discharge a number of civil protection ‘duties’. These duties are to;

- Assess the risk of emergencies occurring and use this to inform contingency planning;
- Put in place emergency plans;
- Put in place business continuity management arrangements;
- Put in place arrangements to make information available to the public about civil protection matters and maintain arrangements to warn, inform and advise the public in the event of an emergency;
- Share information with other local responders to enhance co-ordination;
- Co-operate with other local responders to enhance co-ordination and efficiency; and
- Provide advice and assistance to businesses and voluntary organisations about business continuity management (*Local Authorities only*).

Additional hazard-related legislation places similar responsibilities on local authorities in respect of preparing ‘off-site’ emergency plans for Control of Major Hazard

# Emergency planning – District Councillors’ fact sheet

(COMAH) sites (five in Lincolnshire), for Pipeline Safety (eight significant lines), Marine or Offshore installation pollution, and an advisory role on event safety in the county (includes planning responses to major incidents connected to the event).

## Responding to emergencies

In any ‘emergency’ local authorities have a number of ‘lead responder’ roles & responsibilities including;

- Emergency evacuation, immediate shelter and (medium to long term) welfare of survivors, victims, evacuees (including humanitarian assistance)
- Welfare of *all* responders
- Investigation / enforcement / food and environmental protection (human/animal diseases)
- Clean up pollution & waste management
- Emergency mortuary provision
- Highways (closures/cordons) and emergency transportation
- Remediation / reoccupation of sites
- Co-ordination of the voluntary sector (including convergent volunteers)
- Appeals fund management / cost recovery / emergency expenditure
- Help lines & non-emergency contact numbers
- Co-ordination between elected members and officers
- Lead long-term community recovery
- Specific roles to respond as ‘local lead flood authority’ to incidents (and investigate the causes) of flooding
- Act as shore-based ‘County Oil Pollution Officer’ in event of marine pollution
- Support and advise on the protection of public health during emergencies

## What is emergency planning?

The Emergency Planning team provides a service on behalf of the county council and, through a service level agreement, to the seven Districts/Boroughs. Our work ensures the council discharges its duties and is prepared to deliver the ‘lead roles and responsibilities’ described above.

The success of emergency planning can be measured by the;

- Effectiveness of our ‘command & control’ arrangements for dealing with external emergencies or disruption to business continuity, the
- Preparedness of those council services with a critical role in emergency response or recovery, and the



# Emergency planning – District Councillors’ fact sheet

- Efficiency of the local resilience partnerships (local resilience forum, or LRF) it engages with, including closer working arrangements.

We are also responsible for ensuring the right people are trained to do their jobs during emergencies, and we lead on designing and running those important exercises (such as the ‘award winning’ Exercise Watermark in 2011, and Exercise Georgiana earlier this year) that test our preparedness.



### ***The ‘award winning’ Exercise***

***Watermark;*** Over 1,000 local partners and 420 members of the public participated in a range of events throughout the week long exercise, with 50 independent observers including HRH Duke of Gloucester, the Minister responsible for flooding, local MPs and councillors, civic dignitaries and European flood experts.

Local and national media interest in Lincolnshire’s efforts culminated with the announcement of an additional £250,000 funding for flood rescue assets by the Minister and provided excellent public awareness and engagement.

In Lincolnshire, the county council is the key member of the LRF. The Head of Emergency Planning provides the ‘Secretariat’ for the partnership, with all planning work being co-ordinated by the Emergency Planning team. We have encouraged closer, more efficient working arrangements with other emergency planners from Police, Health and Environment Agency through the creation of the Joint Emergency Management Service (JEMS), based at Fire & Rescue Headquarters and managed by our Head of Service.

## What is an LRF and why do we have one?

Lincolnshire’s Resilience Forum is a partnership made up of all the organisations needed to prepare for and respond to any major emergency in the county. The Forum covers the Lincolnshire Police force area, and includes the emergency services, local authorities, Environment Agency and health agencies along with voluntary and private agencies.

Under the Civil Contingencies Act (2004) every part of the United Kingdom is required to establish a resilience forum (ours is currently chaired by Deputy Chief Constable Jason Harwin and Chief Fire Officer Mark Baxter).

# Emergency planning – District Councillors’ fact sheet

The purpose of the LRF is;

‘to establish and maintain effective multi-agency arrangements to respond to emergencies, minimize the impact of those emergencies on the public, property and environment of Lincolnshire and to satisfy fully the requirements of the Civil Contingencies Act and other hazard-related legislation

All services and organisations work together to ensure that the best possible preparations and plans are in place for emergencies. These are regularly tested (see Exercise Georgiana above) and updated so that agencies can respond immediately and effectively to any threat.

## What is your role during emergencies?

Whilst members (at county or district level) do not perform ‘command & control’ roles (this is provided by specially trained senior officers from the council – normally at Director or Assistant Director Level), you have a key role to play during emergencies to provide community leadership and reassurance and, in particular, to ensure long-term community recovery following an event.

We will ensure you are fully briefed and kept informed on any emergencies affecting those communities you represent.

Ian Reed ([ian.reed@lincoln.fire-uk.org](mailto:ian.reed@lincoln.fire-uk.org))

Head of Emergency Planning & Business Continuity Service

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